

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EUR-12 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /089 W
----- 053501

R 032200Z MAY 76

FM AMCONSUL BELIZE

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

SECSTATE WASHDC 4926

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 0102

AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 BELIZE 0394

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR PFOR GT BH UK

SUBJECT: MINISTER ROGERS' REMARKS ON THE DEFENSE OF BELIZE

1. AN INDICATION OF HOW GOB VIEWS ITS DEFENSE PROBLEM AND A GLIMPSE OF THE STATUS OF PLANNING FOR AN EVENTUAL BELIZEAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT WERE CONTAINED IN A SPEECH DELIVERED APRIL 30 BY DEPUTY PREMIER C.L.B. ROGERS TO GRADUATING CLASS OF POLICE TRAINING SCHOOL. FOLLOWING IS RELEVANT EXCERPT:

"I HAVE EVERY CONFIDENCE THAT YOU ARE READY, THAT YOUR SMARTNESS AND ALERTNESS ON PARADE ARE INDICATIONS OF YOUR PREPAREDNESS FOR TOUGH TASKS. YOUR DEMEANOUR GIVES ASSURANCE OF THIS. IT GIVES US ASSURANCE THAT YOU HAVE ACCEPTED IT AS YOUR DUTY TO PROTECT OUR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS AND WAY OF LIFE FROM ANYONE OR ANY GROUP, WHETHER EXTERNAL OR INTERNAL, WHICH SEEKS TO DESTROY THEM BY VIOLENT MEANS. SHOULD THERE BE ANY AMONG OUR ENEMIES WHO

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DOUBT YOUR ABILITY AND YOUR DETERMINATION TO UPHOLD THE LAW,

TO PRESERVE ORDER AND TO DEAL WITH WRONG-DOERS, HE SHOULD BE
HERE TODAY -- HE WOULD SURELY CHANGE HIS MIND.

"YOUR DETERMINATION IS PARALLELED BY, INDEED IS A REFLECTION
OF THE DETERMINATION OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE TO PRO-
TECT OUR HERITAGE AT ALL COSTS. THIS BRINGS ME TO THE SECOND
WAY IN WHICH THIS PASSING OUT IS SYMBOLIC. IT IS SYMBOLIC NOT
ONLY OF YOUR READINESS BUT OF OURS, THE GOVERNMENT'S AND THE
PEOPLE'S READINESS, TO DO WHAT IS NECESSARY IN OUR SELF-DEFENCE
AGAINST WOULD-BE AGGRESSORS.

"BELIZE'S MEANS OF SELF DEFENCE, LIKE THOSE OF ALL OTHER COUNTRIES,
ARE AT LEAST OF THREE KINDS. SELF DEFENCE IS NOT A MATTER ONLY OF
ARMS AND THE MEASURES WE TAKE TO WARD OFF AGGRESSORS WILL NOT
ALL FALL IN THE MILITARY FIELD. SELF DEFENCE BEGINS AT HOME.
IT BEGINS WITH CIVILIAN READINESS. AS STATED IN THE LAST ELEC-
TION MANIFESTO OF THE PEOPLE'S UNITED PARTY, "AN INFORMED, MOTI-
VATED AND PARTICIPATING CITIZENRY CONSTITUTES OUR MINIMUM DEFENCE
AGAINST THOSE WHO WOULD DESPOIL AND DISMEMBER OUR BELOVED
BELIZE." DEFENCE BEGINS WITH THE PEOPLE AND THE DETERMINATION
TO REMAIN FREE. BY OVERCOMING NATIONAL INERTIA, BY STRENGTHENING
THE ECONOMY, BY PROMOTING UNITY AND LETTING IT BE KNOWN THAT
AS A PEOPLE WE ARE READY TO BEAR ANY SACRIFICE TO PRESERVE OUR
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY, WE CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEFENCE OF BELIZE.
CIVILIAN READINESS, CIVILIAN STRENGTH AND MORALE CONSTITUTES OUR
FIRST LINE OF DEFENCE.

"OUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENCE IS A WORLD OPINION THAT IS INFORMED
ABOUT OUR CASE AND THAT EXPRESSES ITSELF IN OUR SUPPORT. THIS
LINE OF DEFENCE RUNS THROUGH THE UNITED NATIONS AND IS GIVEN FORM
AND SUBSTANCE BY THE RESOLUTION IN OUR FAVOUR ADOPTED LAST YEAR
BY AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THE COUNTRIES REPRESENTED IN THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY. OUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENCE ALSO RUNS THROUGH
THE ALLIANCES WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO FORM WITH COUNTRIES WELL DIS-
POSED TOWARDS US. THE PEOPLE'S UNITED PARTY MANIFESTO FOR THE
INDEPENDENT BELIZE EXPRESSES WELL OUR POSITION: "BY OURSELVES WE
ARE SMALL AND (RELATIVELY) HELPLESS, BUT IN COMMUNITY AND IN
UNITY WE ARE STRONG. IN A COMMUNITY OF NATIONS, SUCH AS THE
CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY, WE GROW STRONGER."

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"OUR ALLIANCES MAY NOT AT PRESENT HAVE GREAT MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE,
ALTHOUGH THEY DO HAVE SOME. FROM THE DEFENCE POINT OF VIEW THE
STRENGTH OF OUR ALLIANCE LIES PRIMARILY IN THE MORAL SPHERE. THE
MORAL FORCE OF WORLD OPINION HAS BEEN MOBILISED ON OUR BEHALF BY
SUCH MEASURES AS THE RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT LAST YEAR'S COMMONWEALTH
CONFERENCE HELD IN KINGSTON, JAMAICA AND THE LIMA CONFERENCE OF
NON-ALLIGNED NATIONS. THE MORAL FORCE OF WORLD OPINION AS EX-
PRESSED BY SUCH RESOLUTIONS IS A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH BY

THOSE IN THE ENEMY CAMP.

"THIRDLY, AND LASTLY AMONG OUR LINES OF DEFENCE ARE THE MILITARY MEASURES WE HAVE TAKEN AND CAN TAKE TO PROTECT OUR BORDERS. ADMITTEDLY, WE CANNOT HOPE TO BE ABLE, UNAIDED, TO DEFEAT BY FORCE OF ARMS AN ENEMY MANY TIMES STRONGER THAN OURSELVES AND ONE WHO IS AIDED BY A SUPER POWER. WE CAN, HOWEVER, INFLICT SUCH HEAVY LOSSES ON HIM THAT THE PRICE HE WILL HAVE TO PAY FOR HIS VICTORY MUST ENTER INTO HIS CALCULATIONS. EVEN A BULLY WILL THINK TWICE ABOUT ATTACKING A SMALLER OPPONENT IF HE KNOWS THE OPPONENT CAN CAUSE HIM SEVERE PAIN. OVER AND ABOVE THIS, IT IS ALSO A FACT THAT A SMALL MILITARY FORCE CAN HOLD UP A MUCH LARGER FORCE FOR A TIME, ENABLING HELP TO ARRIVE FROM OUTSIDE PLACES AND THE PRESSURE OF AN OUTRAGED WORLD OPINION, OUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENCE, TO BE MOBILISED BY OUR FRIENDS.

"IT IS WITH THESE CONSIDERATION IN MIND THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED, IN THE FACE OF CONTINUING THREATS, TO CREATE A MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT IN PROPORTION TO OUR RESOURCES.

"THIS DEFENCE FORCE ON WHICH PLANNING IS QUIETLY PROCEEDING, WILL BE COMPOSED OF A REGULAR ELEMENT, PROPERLY TRAINED AND EQUIPPED AND FULLY SUPPORTED BY A LARGE COUNTRY-WIDE VOLUNTEER SECTION, PREPARED TO BE QUICKLY MOBILISED IN CASE OF NEED. THE PROFESSIONAL BACKING THAT THE REGULAR FORCE WILL PROVIDE IS ESSENTIAL TO THE VIABILITY OF THE TOTAL FORCE IN TERMS OF MEETING THE AIMS I HAVE MENTIONED IN RELATION TO OUR THIRD LINE OF DEFENCE. THE VOLUNTEER ELEMENT WILL THEREBY BE GREATLY IMPROVED OVER THE VALUABLE FORCE WE PRESENTLY HAVE.

"THIS IS A CALL FOR OUR YOUNG MEN TO LOOK WITH FAVOUR ON A CAREER IN THE REGULAR ARMY. WE ANTICIPATE NO GREAT DIFFICULTY IN RECRUITING THE NUMBERS WE SHALL NEED, SO WHEN THE CALL COMES LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BE READY TO TAKE UP THE CHALLENGE.
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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EUR-12 ACDA-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /089 W

----- 055518

R 032200Z MAY 76

FM AMCONSUL BELIZE

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

SECSTATE WASHDC 4927

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR PFOR GT BH UK

SUBJECT: MINISTER ROGERS' REMARKS ON THE DEFENSE OF BELIZE

"WE LOOK TO THE UK GOVERNMENT TO JOIN US IN THIS VENTURE OF SELF-RELIANCE WHICH FITS IN WITH ITS PRESENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR DEFENCE--A RESPONSIBILITY WHICH IT HAS CARRIED OUT IN SUCH FASHION AS TO DESERVEDLY EARN THE RESPECT AND GRATITUDE OF THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF BELIZE. THE BILL WILL BE HIGH; BUT OUR HOPES AND EXPECTATION ARE ALSO NECESSARILY HIGH AND WE WILL NOT SHIRK OUR OWN RESPONSIBILITIES. WE NEED TO BE ASSISTED FULLY, BEARING IN MIND OUR FINANCIAL CAPABILITIES, OUR RIGHT TO BE DEFENDED AND OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACT THAT ULTIMATELY GREATER AND GREATER COST FOR OUR OWN DEFENCE WILL DEVOLVE ON THE PEOPLE OF BELIZE. WE WILL PLAN FOR THAT DAY WHEN WE WILL BE ASSUMING FULL COSTS, BUT WE NEED CAPITAL ASSISTANCE, PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT AND TRAINING NOW.

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"YOU AS MEMBERS OF THE POLICE FORCE MAY WELL WONDER WHAT THIS DEFENCE FORCE WILL MEAN TO YOU; WHAT WILL BE YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THIS FORCE?

"WHILE CERTAIN DIFFERENCES MAY BE OBVIOUS AND CERTAIN CONDITIONS OF SERVICE MUST NEED BE DIFFERENT, THE CLOSEST FEASIBLE LIAISON

WILL HAVE TO BE MAINTAINED BETWEEN THE SPECIAL FORCE AND THE DEFENCE FORCE. EACH WILL PROVIDE A CAREER FOR THE BELIZEAN AND GIVE HIM A CHOICE. WE WILL ENSURE THAT DEVELOPMENT OF POLICE AND MILITARY MOVE FORWARD IN A RATIONAL FASHION SINCE THE TASKS OF INTERNAL ORDER, SECURITY AND DEFENCE AGAINST OUTSIDE AGGRESSION MAKE UP THE TOTALITY OF OUR EFFORTS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY AND PROTECTION OF OUR BELIZEAN CITIZENRY SO THAT ALL CAN LIVE WITH PRIDE IN PEACE AND TRANQUILITY."

2. SPEECH WAS PRECEDED BY CLOSE ORDER INFANTRY DRILL AND FOLLOWED BY A DEMONSTRATION OF RIOT CONTROL TACTICS, BOTH OF WHICH WERE IMPRESSIVE FOR THEIR PRECISION AND VIGOR.

3. COMMENT: THE EVENT DEMONSTRATED ERROR OF VIEW OFTEN EXPRESSED HERE THAT BELIZEANS AS SOLDIERS WOULD BE HOPELESS. POLICE TRAINING SCHOOL IS BEING RUN BY FORMER BRITISH ARMY MAN PREVIOUSLY AN AFRICAN MERCENARY, UNDER CONTRACT WITH GOB. RESULTS HE HAS OBTAINED HERE SUGGEST THERE IS NO REASON BELIZE CANNOT DEVELOP A SMALL BUT EFFECTIVE MILITARY FORCE IF REQUISITE RESOURCES ARE MADE AVAILABLE.

4. IN COURSE OF SMALL RECEPTION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING CEREMONIES, I CHIDED MINISTER ROGERS FOR SUGGESTING IN HIS SPEECH THAT BELIZEAN ARMED FORCES MIGHT ONE DAY BE PITTED AGAINST AN "ENEMY MANY TIMES STRONGER THAN OURSELVES AND ONE WHO IS AIDED BY A SUPER POWER", WHICH, IN REPLY, HE STOUTLY DEFENDED BY ASKING ME WHETHER IT WERE NOT A FACT THAT GUATEMALAN FORCES WERE U.S. EQUIPPED AND LARGELY U.S. TRAINED. I POINTED OUT THAT LANGUAGE OF SPEECH RAISED SPECTRE OF A U.S. SUPPORTED GUATEMALAN ATTACK ON BELIZE, BUT THAT AS EVENTS OF LAST FALL HAD CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED U.S. MILITARY INFLUENCE IN GUATEMALA HAD BEEN USED TO DETER RATHER THAN SUPPORT GUATEMALAN MILITARY ACTION AGAINST HIS COUNTRY AND WOULD BE SO USED AGAIN IF NECESSARY. ARGUMENT ENDED ON FRIENDLY NOTE WITH ROGERS GIVING ME COPY OF SPEECH WHICH I LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ASSUME HE HAD BROUGHT WITH HIM FOR THAT PURPOSE.

5. COMMENT: RESENTMENT AGAINST THE U.S. HAS FOR THE PAST FEW YEARS BEEN AN INGREDIENT OF THE GOB'S PUBLIC POLICY IN REGARD TO THE UK-GUATEMALA DISPUTE, AND THE GOB SEEMS TO BELIEVE (CORRECTLY, IN MY OPINION) THAT AN OCCASIONAL ANTI-AMERICAN UTTERANCE STRIKES A RESPONSIVE CHORD WITH BELIZEAN PUBLIC. THIS DEVICE IS BEING USED HERE FAIRLY FREQUENTLY THESE DAYS. ROGERS, WHOSE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE U.S. IS ABOUT WHAT ONE MIGHT EXPECT FROM A FOREIGN ALUMNUS OF LEWISBURG PENITENTIARY, ESPECIALLY RELISHES THIS SORT OF BARBED BAITING, BELIEVING, NO DOUBT, THAT IF HE CASTS HIS FLY JUST RIGHT HE CAN GET A RISE FROM THE U.S. CONSUL GENERAL AND THUS GET HIS VIEWS REPORTED TO WASHINGTON.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CIVIL DEFENSE, POLICIES, NATIONAL SECURITY, SPEECHES, POLICE FORCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BELIZE00394
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760171-1098
From: BELIZE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760599/aaaadgxm.tel
Line Count: 278
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 MAY 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MINISTER ROGERS' REMARKS ON THE DEFENSE OF BELIZE
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, GT, BH, UK, (ROGERS, CARL LINDBERG B)
To: LONDON
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006